

**From:** Annette Hall  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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I was extremely displeased to see that certain states refused to settle the Microsoft lawsuit. It is my opinion that their refusal to do so is not for the reason of benefiting consumers. Instead, the purpose is to inflict maximum financial and commercial harm on Microsoft so that competitors of Microsoft who are located in those states can gain commercial advantage over Microsoft. Though very successful in their own right, these companies didn't have the same amazing level of success as Microsoft. They haven't been able to surpass Microsoft's success by normal competitive means, so they are trying to do it by lawsuit, even if it means harm to consumers. The financial penalties that have already been inflicted on Microsoft have more than paid for any perceived "wrongdoing" they may have committed in zealously pursuing success in the high tech industry. In my opinion, by attacking Microsoft in such a jealous, vindictive and selfish way, the initiators of this lawsuit are responsible for accelerating the serious financial downturn the high tech sector has experienced since the lawsuit was filed. The high tech sector's troubles ultimately affected the entire business world in a seriously negative way. The goal of these lawsuit initiators was not to stop Microsoft from doing something illegal; it was to seriously harm Microsoft as a competitor by any means necessary, even if it meant harming a thriving and vibrant economy. That economy was due in no small part to the economic riches Microsoft brought to millions of people directly and indirectly.

By harming Microsoft to the extreme extent that they have, these people have seriously harmed consumers, individual investors, small businesses, and large businesses nationwide, and even worldwide. Ironically, Larry Ellison, Scott McNealy, Jim Barksdale, et al, and their respective cohort states got hit by the economic downturn that their lawsuit precipitated. They miscalculated by thinking a lawsuit against Microsoft would result in a surgically precise knockout punch, with no harm to themselves. Despite their miscalculation, these men are still immeasurably rich. I, on the other hand, suffered great financial harm when my measly 2000 shares of Microsoft stock plunged in value to such an extent that I had to sell them. I had a margin loan on those shares, which I had used to finance a business project. In August, 1999, at 50 years old, I left a full-time job to go into business for myself and complete this project. I used the value of my 2000 shares of stock to finance it. I had planned to pay off the loan once my project started generating income and then save the shares for their original intended purpose: as a retirement fund. When the value of my shares plunged to such an extent that I had to cash them in to pay off the margin loan, it seriously harmed my project and my financial condition. In fact, I had to call a halt to the work in 2000 until I could find other means to

resume and finish my project. It wasn't until just this month that I was able to raise the funds necessary to do so. I am now in serious debt, thanks to Scott McNealy, Larry Ellison, the US DOJ, et al. I am not alone in this situation.

Thanks for nothing. SETTLE THIS LAWSUIT NOW before any further harm is done to us little people!

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